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TAGS: PREL PGOV MOPS RW

SUBJECT: RWANDA: TRIPARTITE PLUS DEFENSE CHIEFS MEETING
FOLLOW-UP

REF: STATE 56801

Classified By: Ambassador Michael R. Arietti, reason 1.4 (B/D)

¶1. (SBU) Ambassador met with Ministry of Defense and armed forces officials on May 2 to discuss the recent chiefs of defense staff meeting in Bujumbura (Reftel). Ministry Secretary General Zac Nsenga, Generals Rutatina and

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Musemakweli, RDF Spokesman Rutaremara and Military Prosecutor Bizimungu attended for the Rwandans. DATT and pol/econ chief accompanied the Ambassador.

¶2. (C) The Rwandans described the four action scenarios reached during the April 18 chiefs meeting as listed in chronological order, with each successive scenario to be conducted after the preceding scenario. The Rwandans described the recent action taken by the FARDC against FDLR positions in eastern Congo as "consistent" with Scenario One, but not necessarily based upon it. The Rwandans said that Scenario Two and Three included cross-border operations, and were intended to be "choices" of the member states to be decided upon at the next Tripartite Plus Commission sessions in Kinshasa. Combined operations could be "bilateral" or "multilateral," (i.e., involving two or more Tripartite member states), would be aimed at the leadership of negative forces, and could be conducted simultaneously in more than one member state. No discussion occurred regarding the enlisting of non-member countries such as Angola in confronting negative forces.

¶3. (C) Regarding reports of Congolese reticence at the defense chiefs meeting, the Rwandans said that the DRC initially sent a relatively low-ranking division commander to the "experts" meeting that preceded the chiefs of defense staff discussions. At various stages the DRC Defense Chief, General Lombe, refused to sign on to more than the first scenario, and then relented when pressed by his colleagues. According to the Rwandans, Lombe was ultimately swayed by the argument that the defense chiefs task was to frame and define possible strategies for approval by political superiors. The Rwandans acknowledged that DRC politically "may not accept" portions of Scenarios Two and Three. (Note: reftel refers to the lack of a Congolese signature on the defense chiefs Report, but the copy presented by the Rwandans had the signatures of all four defense chiefs appended at its end, and their initials on each preceding page. End note).

ARIETTI